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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 6122

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SUBJECT: MAJOR PROBLEMS FACING NICS

A. STATE 234644

B. USNATO 5684

SUMMARY: COST, SCHEDULE, AND OTHER PROBLEMS OF NICS HAVE CREATED DOUBT ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE PROGRAM AND MAY CAUSE GENERAL LOSS OF CONFIDENCE IN IT. LOW LEVEL OF NEXT INFRASTRUCTURE COST-SHARING TOTAL MAKES FUNDING FOR NICS EVEN TO IAU 150 MILLION DOUBTFUL. PRESSURES ON NICS PROBABLY WILL FORCE ITS REDIRECTION OR REDEFINITION WITHIN A YEAR. STRONG US LEADERSHIP WILL HELP FORESTALL FURTHER EROSION OF CONFIDENCE IN NICS. MISSION RECOMMENDS A US STATEMENT AT THE DECEMBER 1975 DPC MINISTERIAL MEETING TO ACCELERATE DECISIONS ON THE FUTURE OF NICS, THEREBY MINIMIZING TIME LOST FOR REORIENTATION. STATEMENT WE PROPOSE, BESIDES REITERATING URGENT NEED AND CONTINUED US SUPPORT FOR NICS, ADVISES THAT US WILL OFFER PROPOSALS FOR NJCEC CONSIDERATION, RECOMMENDS THAT NICSMA CONTRACT FOR SYSTEMS ENGINEERING ASSISTANCE, AND ASKS THAT THE NJCEC SUBMIT
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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DPC DECISION AT SPRING 1975 MINISTERIAL MEETING. AS A START TOWARD COLLABORATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF US PROPOSALS ON NICS REHABILITATION, MISSION SUGGESTS FOCUSING ON A CURTAILED BUT BALANCED SYSTEM BUILT AROUND THE TARES AND

IVSN. END SUMMARY.

1. MISSION WELCOMES WASHINGTON AGREEMENT (REF A) THAT US MUST PROVIDE LEADERSHIP TO RESOLVE THE MAJOR PROBLEMS FACING NICS. DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS MAY DEMONSTRATE THAT CHANGES TO THE NICS CONCEPT ARE NECESSARY. AS A RESULT OF THE COST AND SCHEDULE PROBLEMS OF NICS, MANY ALLIED NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES NOW TAKE THE POSITION, SOME OFFICIALLY AND OTHERS UNOFFICIALLY, THAT NICS MAY NOT PROGRESS BEYOND THE TARE-IVSN STAGE (I.E., THAT THE ULTIMATE NODAL CONCEPT MAY NEVER BE IMPLEMENTED). GERMANY IS PREPARING A PAPER ELABORATING THE STATEMENT MADE BY ITS REPRESENTATIVE TO THE NJCEC ON IVSN SWITCHES. THIS PAPER WILL PROPOSE TO REORIENT THE IVSN TO LIKEN IT MORE TO THE MODAL CONCEPT OF NICS, ANTICIPATING THAT THE IVSN MAY BE THE ONLY VOICE SWITCHED NETWORK FOR SOME YEARS. BELGIAN AUTHORITIES ALSO HAVE QUESTIONED THE FUTURE COURSE OF NICS. THIS GROWING DOUBT ABOUT THE FUTURE OF NICS, COMPOUNDED BY THE OTHER PROBLEMS IT FACES, COULD LEAD TO GENERAL LOSS OF CONFIDENCE IN THE PROGRAM. IMMEDIATE AND STRONG LEADERSHIP BY THE US COULD STOP FURTHER EROSION OF CONFIDENCE.

2. WE ARE AWARE THAT WASHINGTON HAS ONLY RECENTLY RECEIVED NICS IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS REPORT ("BLUE BOOK") UPDATES AND MAY NOT HAVE TIME TO DIGEST THE IMPACT OF NEW DATA. NICSMA REPRESENTATIVES NOW ADMIT UNOFFICIALLY THAT THE ESTIMATED COSTS OF SOME PROJECTS HAVE RISEN ABOVE THOSE IN THE UPDATES. PRESENT NICS FUNDING WILL BARELY COVER THE NEWLY DEFINED STAGE I OF NICS. THE LOW TOTAL FOR THE NEXT INFRASTRUCTURE COST-SHARING PERIOD MAKES FUNDING EVEN TO IAU 150M FOR NICS DOUBTFUL. IN OUR ESTIMATION, THE PRESSURES ON NICS WILL FORCE A REDIRECTION OR REDFINATION OF THE PROGRAM WITHIN A YEAR AT MOST.

3. MISSION RECOMMENDS A US STATEMENT BY SECRETARY SCHLESINGER OF NICS PROBLEMS AT THE DECEMBER 1974 DPC MINISTERIAL MEETING. THE CHIEF REASON FOR SUCH A STATEMENT IS TO ACCELERATE THE DECISION PROCESS ON THE FUTURE OF NICS. IT OFFERS THE POTENTIAL CONFIDENTIAL

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OF A DPC MINISTERIAL DECISION SIX MONTHS EARLIER, IN SPRING 1975 RATHER THAN IN FALL 1975. WE RECOMMEND THAT THE US STATEMENT COVER THE FOLLOWING:

A. SUMMARIZE THE MAJOR PROBLEMS FACING NICS, POINTING OUT THAT THEIR SOLUTIONS REQUIRE DECISIONS BY SENIOR ALLIED POLICY-MAKERS.

B. STATE CONTINUING US SUPPORT FOR NICS WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT THE PROBLEMS MAY LEAD TO SOME CHANGES IN THE PROGRAM. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE US WILL OFFER PROPOSALS TO THE ALLIES AT LEAST SIXTY DAYS BEFORE THE MARCH 1975 MEETING OF THE NJCEC FOR DISCUSSION AT THAT SESSION.

C. URGE THAT ALL ALIED GOVERNMENTS BE READY TO MAKE CONCESSIONS ON AN EXCEPTIONAL BASIS TO FIND SOLUTIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, NICS FUNDING LIMITATIONS MAY FORCE REDUCTIONS IN THE QUANTITITES NOW PLANNED FOR SOME EQUIPMENT. IF SO, NATIONS SHOULD LET NETWORK PERATIONAL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER OTHER INTERESTS IN ALLOCATING THE AVAILABLE EQUIPMENT.

D. PROPOSE THAT NICSMA CONTRACT WITH A GROUP OF COMPETENT INDIVIDUALS TO SO SYSTEMS ENGINEERING TASKS. THESE ENGINEERS SHOULD REVIEW CURRENT NICS SYSTEMS ENGINEERING EXPDITIOUSLY; REVIEW ANY PROPOSALS FOR SYSTEM CHANGES SUBMITTED BY ALLIED GOVERNMENTS; AND, IN COLLABORATION WITH NICSMA, FORMULATE A PRACTICABLE, ACHIEVABLE, AND COMPLETE SYSTEM PLAN. THIS OUTSIDE HELP NOT ONLY WILL LEAD TO EARLIER RESULTS BUT ALSO WILL PROVIDE IMPARTIAL REVIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS. THE URGENT NEED TO RE-ENERGIZE THE NICS PROGRAM JUSTIFIES THIS UNUSUAL STEP.

E. ASK THAT THE NJCEC BE DIRECTED TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE FUTURE COURSE OF NICS FOR DECISION BY DEFENSE MINISTERS AT THE SPRING 1975 DPC MINISTERIAL.

4. ANOTHER IMMEDIATE STEP IS, AS DEPARTMENT SUGGESTS, COLLABORATION BETWEEN USNATO AND WASHINGTON TO DEVELOP PROPOSALS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF NICS. FOR OPERERES, WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING PRAGMATIC BASES FOR THESE PROPOSALS.
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A. FUNDING BEYOND THAT NOW ENVISAGED (APPROX IAU 150M) IS UNLIKELY AND THE PRESENT AMOUNT MUST YIELD A BALANCED SYSTEM SHORT OF THE ULTIMATE NODAL SYSTEM.

B. THE IVSN AND TARE PROJECTS AS NOW DEFINED MAY REQUIRE MODIFICATION TO ACHIEVE BALANCE WITHIN THE FUNDING LIMIT. IN PARTICULAR, THE IVSN SWITCHES MAY REQUIRE MORE TECHNICAL CAPABILITY, AND THE LOCATION OF BOTH IVSN AND TARE SWITCHES MAY REQUIRE CHANGE (POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS NOTWITHSTANDING).

C. THE CURTAILED SYSTEM, THOUGH BALANCED, MUST BE ABLE TO EVOLVE EASILY INTO THE ULTIMATE NODAL SYSTEM.

D. THE CURTAILED SYSTEM MUST BE CONDUCIVE TO ACHIEVEMENT OF US RATIONALIZATION AND SPECIALIZATION OBJECTIVES (I.E., CONSOLIDATION OF COMMUNICATIONS).

E. REQUIREMENTS FOR ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL MUST BE MINIMIZED.
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